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VA's Million Veteran Program hits 400K Milestone

Program Expected to be Among World's Largest Databases

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) [Million Veteran Program \(MVP\)](#) has enrolled its 400,000th Veteran volunteer, squarely putting it on track to become one of the world's largest medical databases, linking genetic, clinical, lifestyle and military-exposure information, with the goal of learning more about the role of genes in health and disease.

“We are proud to see the progress being made in MVP, and we are confident the knowledge gained through this research will have a very tangible and positive impact on the health care that Veterans and all Americans receive,” said VA Secretary Robert A. McDonald. “We applaud our Veterans participating in the program. The selfless sacrifice they are making will allow researchers to gain valuable, important information.”

Veterans who volunteer for the program donate blood, from which DNA is extracted, and periodically fill out surveys about their health, health-related behaviors and military experiences. They also consent to having authorized researchers access the information in their VA electronic health record, and to being re-contacted for future research opportunities. All information, genetic and otherwise, is kept secure and de-identified. Samples and data are coded; no names, birthdates or social security numbers are shared.

MVP, in operation at more than 50 VA medical centers nationwide, is already the largest database of its type in the United States. Data collected through MVP are available to researchers for use in approved studies, to include posttraumatic stress disorder, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, substance use disorders and heart and kidney disease.

MVP is a part of the [Precision Medicine Initiative](#) announced by President Obama earlier this year. The initiative aims to move health care forward into an era in which disease prevention and treatment will be tailored to individual patients on the basis of their genes and other factors.

“VA is thrilled to be working closely with the White House and other federal partners on the president's Precision Medicine Initiative,” said VA Chief Research and Development Officer Timothy O’Leary, M.D., Ph.D. “We are committed to making precision medicine a reality for Veterans and the nation.”

For more information about MVP and VA research in general, visit www.research.va.gov.